

AVIAN INFLUENZA UPDATE 3/2018

06 FEBRUARY 2018

IRELAND

A white tailed sea eagle tested positive for Avian Influenza subtype H5N6 on the 05 February 2018. The bird was found dead on 31 January (week 5) in County Tipperary near Portumna. The sample has been sent for further testing and we should know within a few days whether it is highly or lowly pathogenic. This is the first occurrence of the H5N6 subtype in Ireland - although. It is likely that the virus was introduced into Ireland by migratory birds, and that the eagle became infected when scavenging a dead bird.

HPAI H5N6 first appeared in the Netherlands on 22 December 2017 and has since spread to Germany, Switzerland, UK and Ireland. The UK has confirmed highly pathogenic H5N6 in wild birds in 12 mortality events in England since the beginning of January 2018. The latest case was confirmed on 5 February 2018 in a mute swan in Warwickshire in Central England.



A list of susceptible species of birds is available on the Department website at: [List of Wild Bird Species for Targeted Surveillance](#). Examples of the species of birds confirmed to date with H5N6 in Europe can be seen in the table below;

Swans	Ducks
Mute Swan	Tufted Duck
	Aylesbury duck
Birds of Prey	Mallard
White tailed eagle	Pochard
Gulls	Geese
Great black backed gulls	Canada goose
Herring gull	Greylag goose
Common gull	
Black headed gull	Other Waterbirds
	Moorhen
Captive Birds	Great crested grebe
Guinea fowl	
Peacock	Domestic Birds
	Chicken
	Duck
	Turkey
*Examples of confirmed cases. Not all cases have specified species of bird	

RISK TO HUMAN HEALTH

The HSE Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HSE-HPSC) and the European Centre for Disease Control (ECDC) advise that the that the risk to public health from H5N8 and H5N6 avian influenza is very low and that the disease poses no food safety risk for consumers. However, as a precaution the Department advises that only trained people wearing personal protective equipment collect dead or sick birds. Flock owners and members of the public are not advised to touch dead or sick birds and to report them immediately to the Avian Influenza Hotline at (076) 106 4403 during normal office hours or (1850) 200 456 outside of normal office hours.

BIOSECURITY MEASURES TO BE TAKEN

Biosecurity measures should be implemented without delay on all premises that contain poultry or other birds. Dedicated biosecurity advice leaflets for poultry, duck, geese and turkey farmers can be found [here](#) on the Department website in the Animal Health and Welfare Section. Examples of some measures that can be taken include;

- Use an [approved disinfectant](#) at entrance/exit to premises (a list can be found on the Department website)
- Ensure that there is no contact between wild birds and poultry or captive birds
- Prevent wild bird access to feed and bedding
- Keep area clean and tidy and keep rodents under control
- Regularly disinfect houses and equipment
- Feed and water birds in areas that wild birds do not have access
- Use dedicated clothing and footwear for attending to the flock
- Clean and disinfect hands and footwear after working with birds
- Limit movements of birds on/off the premises and only source birds from reliable sources
- Isolate any bought in birds for at least 2 weeks if possible and attend to these after the rest of the flock.
- Remain vigilant for any signs of illness and **report to your [local Regional Veterinary Office](#) or the **Avian Influenza Hotline**** without delay if you notice any of the following: unexplained deaths, respiratory signs such as coughing, sneezing or gaping, swollen heads or wattles, blue discolouration of head and neck, drop in egg production or a loss of appetite.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Advice for poultry keepers is available on the Department website in the Animal Health and Welfare Section – Avian Influenza.

The Department reminds flock owners to ensure their premises registration details are up to date. Details of how you can update/register your flock can be found in the [Poultry Registration Section](#) of the website.

NDCC and Border Inspection posts Division